

The Honorable William H. Yohn Jr.
United States District Judge
14613 United States Courthouse
Sixth & Market Street
Philadelphia, Pa 19106-1753

March 4, 2020

Your Honor,

I understand your time is valuable so I will be brief. In October 1990, you said that you sought to be "firm but fair" when seeking your federal position and that your approach as a judge is to "follow the law". I began composing this letter in hopes that as the years have passed, you've continued to hold those same principals paramount and that you would keep them in mind when reading the following. But by the time I concluded, I was confident that you will.

I'm writing you on behalf of Mr. Desmend Wright #54724-066, U.S.P.- Atlanta.

When Desmend stood before you twenty years ago, he had not even reached the fully developed male brain age of 25. Both his crime and attitude reflected that. His original sentence was firm and arguably fair when there is no way of knowing if an individual will waste or take advantage of that time. But factor in an inmate who makes the conscious choice to utilize the time to rehabilitate himself, the scales of lady justice begin to readjust and a sentence that was once fitting is worth revisiting.

Whether one believes the purpose of prison is to punish or to rehabilitate, Mr. Wright has been subjected to both. Twenty years of incarceration is a firm discipline for his crime. However, the opportunities he's been given to use that time for rehabilitation are fair. Regardless of the facility, Mr. Wright has consistently taken full advantage of those opportunities. He's gained skills, knowledge and most importantly, a sense of fulfillment. At 41, he understands that if given the chance, it's his duty to pay it forward in society.

Your honor, towards the conclusion of this letter, I learned about your decision to uphold the conviction (firm) but overturn the death sentence (fair) in a very controversial case. Furthermore, you refused to consider a statement at the federal level because it had not been previously considered at the state level (law). I knew then that these thirty years have not wavered you from your original mission. That you were a judge who continues to exercise those principals of "firm but fair" and "following the law" and who can make the hard decisions even in the face of unpopular opinion. This gave me a sense of confidence that you will take an objective, comprehensive look at Mr. Wright's case; his background; his age and lack of maturity at the time of conviction; his current age; his subsequent accomplishments during these twenty years served, and the law in question in this case (Johnson v. United States). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stacey Tolson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stacey Tolson

I kindly ask that you bear the following volunteer programs, skills learned, courses taken and jobs held by Mr. Wright in mind and consider a resentencing under 18 U.S.C. 3553(a), Post Sentencing Rehabilitation:

1. Orderly in the unit
2. Orderly in the Record Department
3. Orderly in the Mailroom
4. Orderly in Receiving & Discharging (R&D)
5. ~~Religious-Diet (Common Fare)~~
6. Warehouse Head Clerk
7. Happy Hats Coordinator- Terre Haute
8. Assisted in creating the Happy Hats program- U.S.P. Atlanta
9. Real Men Crochet Project (500 hours of community service)
10. Non-Residential Drug Program
11. Life Connection program (Spiritual Guide Award)
12. Computer Keyboarding
13. Data Entry
14. Receptionist
15. Building Trade Vocational Training
16. Basic Culinary Arts Course (Serve Safe Certificate)
17. Leather shop
18. Forklift

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Stacey Tolson

212 E. Poplar Street

Norristown, PA 19401

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